



# PREPARING THE TOURISM WORKFORCE FOR THE DIGITAL FUTURE

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## Current activity

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- OECD Tourism Committee report on *Preparing the Tourism Workforce for the Digital Future*
- Analyses:
  - ✓ Impact of digital technologies on the nature of tourism work
  - ✓ Skills needed to adapt to changes in a post COVID-19 environment
  - ✓ Current country policy responses supporting adjustment, and
  - ✓ Potential policy considerations



# Digital Technologies and Emerging Impacts on work in Tourism

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- Digitalisation shifting from a driver of marginal efficiency to an enabler of **innovation** and **changed business processes**
- Uptake has been **uneven** with technologies already leading to **transformations** across many parts of the sector
- As a '**disruptive** technology' there is a need to consider the strategic implications and better understand opportunities and challenges
- **Acceleration** of digital uptake and integration expected due to COVID
- Tourism workers will need **different skills**, not just more skills, to **thrive** in the digital economy



# A Changing Skills Gap in the Digital Tourism Economy

- Displacement by robotics?
- Guest acceptance?

**JOB  
SUBSTITUTION**

**NEW SKILL  
MIXES**

- More jobs needing 'digital fluency'

AND ...

- Strong cognitive skills

- Impeded digital transformation
- Acute for unprepared SMEs

**SKILL  
SHORTAGES**

**WIDER SKILLS  
GAPS**

- Digital fluency + complimentary skills

- SME manager skills a key constraint to adaption



# Challenges for education and training providers

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- **‘Perfect storm’** facing the tourism sector, including i) slow digital adjustment, ii) pressure for diverse digitalisation skills needs, and iii) a sector struggling to build business recovery and resilience
- Problems meeting future skills needs likely to exert a **drag** on the digital transformation of the sector
- Initial vocational education and training (**IVET**) and continuing education and training (**CVET**) providers will play a crucial role
- Clear signals on emerging skills gaps required
- Responding to the needs of workers **displaced** by incoming technologies, or at risk of doing so, will be crucial



# Policy considerations

## Foresight

Strengthen national skills intelligence/foresight to inform firms and educational reform



## Integrate

Encourage national responses to better integrate approaches to support tourism digitalisation policies:

- ✓ SME awareness
- ✓ Digitisation uptake
- ✓ Stronger CVET/IVET capability

## Training

Encourage stronger work-related adjustment training for the existing workforce

- ✓ Enhanced managers skills
- ✓ Facilitate collaborative actions
- ✓ SME-friendly, low (no) cost 'generic' packages

## SMEs

Target and improve the effectiveness of digitalisation adjustment initiatives for SMEs



# Policy considerations (cont.)

## Value Chains

Build value-chain communities of tourism digital transformation



## Support

Develop support for displaced/at risk workers (early intervention & re-employment)

## Resilience

Promote COVID-19 tourism recovery/resilience through digitalisation SME 'pathfinders'

## Learning

Invest in continuing (adult) learning (CVET) to build vocationally centred digital fluency

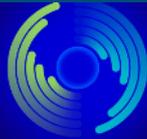


# Find out more at the OECD COVID-19 Hub



**TACKLING CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19):**  
CONTRIBUTING TO A GLOBAL EFFORT

[oecd.org/coronavirus](http://oecd.org/coronavirus)



## Rebuilding tourism for the future: COVID-19 policy responses and recovery

Updated 14 December 2020

The outlook for the tourism sector remains highly uncertain. The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic continues to hit hard, with international tourism expected to decrease by around 80% in 2020. Domestic tourism is helping to soften the blow, at least partially, and governments have taken impressive immediate action to restore and re-activate the sector, while protecting jobs and businesses. Many countries are also now developing measures to build a more resilient tourism economy post COVID-19. These include preparing plans to support the sustainable recovery of tourism, promoting the digital transition and move to a greener tourism system, and rethinking tourism for the future.

REBUILDING TOURISM FOR THE FUTURE: COVID-19 POLICY RESPONSES AND RECOVERY © OECD 2020

Tackling coronavirus (COVID-19) - Browse OECD contributions



## OECD Coronavirus Hub

<http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/rebuilding-tourism-for-the-future-covid-19-policy-responses-and-recovery-bced9859//>